Primary Schools Partnership
June Newsletter

2024

University of
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London

A message from our Deputy Dean

Dear colleagues,

We wish you well as you enter the final phase of this academic year. Since the last newsletter, the election news has hit us, with all the uncertainty that this brings. Looking through the major parties manifestos, there is recognition that the deficit in teacher numbers needs to be addressed. Labour have given attention to the role of Ofsted, SEND provision and access to mental health provision. The Conservatives have raised issues around new special free schools and bans on mobile phones. The Liberal Democrats have pledged £1.9 billion of extra capital funding, and similar to Labour they have pledged funding for teacher CPD. Schools Week have provided a useful analysis of the manifesto pledges. As we enter a period of purdah, new announcements on policy have been suspended, and this includes plans for the teacher degree apprenticeship, due for launch in September. We wait to see what the future holds for education policy. In the meantime, we are preparing to implement the new mentor training changes, ready for 2024/25. An overview of how we plan to meet these changes can be found here. We are keen to continue to raise awareness of the Market Review changes that are coming in. I will be running another session on this on **Tuesday 2nd July at 16.00** – please note that the content will be the same as the sessions previously run on 23rd April and 6th June. If you would like to attend the 2nd July session, please use the link below:

Join the meeting now
Meeting ID: 349 784 662 244
Passcode: Wffky6

With best wishes,

Matt Sossick
Deputy Dean and Head of Initial Teacher Education

In this issue

Welcome to our June issue! Senior Lecturer in History Education, Susie Townsend, shares **Primary History Subject Updates** on page 3; whilst Susan Ogier, Senior Lecturer in Art and Design Education, considers the **Student Experience of Art and Design** on page 5. Miles Berry, Professor of Computing Education, discusses **Diversity in Computing** on page 9; and Anna Harrison, Senior Lecturer in English Education reflects on the **Open University Reading and Writing Conference**, held on 15th June, on page 11.

Subject Focus: History

## By Susie Townsend, Senior Lecturer in History Education

History updates

Many of you will know that the Ofsted History report was issued this year. Although the number of schools visited is small and the authorship unclear, its findings are likely to be a focus when reviewing History in both primary and secondary schools. It is good to see that praise is given to primary school teachers for their substantive historical knowledge, especially considering the number of other subjects that they have to teach in the curriculum: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-report-series-history/rich-encounters-with-the-past-history-subject-report

The Historical Association's History Survey is taking place this month. You do not have to be a member to take part and the survey's findings are used to take the pulse of what is happening in schools in terms of history and what teachers feel are key issues. With an election imminent it is a very good time to have your voices heard so please spend a few minutes filling this in. Closing date is mid-July: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BLC2JWD

Recent publications
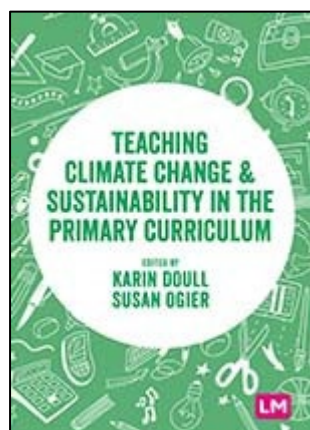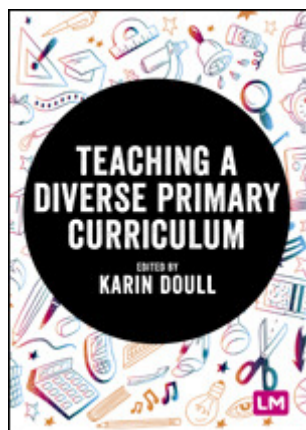
Two books that you might find useful to read – I must admit a bias here, as I have done a chapter in each and my great colleague Karin Doull was one of the editors! Both were published in 2023 by Sage Publications. They look at the curriculum as a whole, so books perhaps for the staffroom.

### Primary Young Quills Award

The Young Quills Award will take place in July and the shortlisted books for this year are pictured right. Did you know though that the long short list comes out the year before, and schools can get the books for free if children write reviews on them? For more details look on the Historical Association website or contact me: susan.townsend@roehampton.ac.uk.

History at Roehampton 2023/24

It has, as always, been a busy year! Year 2 History specialists took part in a pilot ITAPs week, with a focus on developing children's understanding of historical sources and their own pedagogy in considering how to teach children this key process. Huge thanks to Culver House Primary School for not only accommodating all 24 specialists, but changing their days so that the students could observe history being taught across KS 1 and KS 2 and get the opportunity to teach the classes themselves. The students found the week really useful and challenging and I look forward to developing the practice next year. Also thanks to Karin Doull for her support and mentoring during the week.

The Ofsted view of ITAPS is to consider an aspect of teaching in a granular, precise way with good practice being modelled by experienced staff and then replicated by the students. But there is no one way to teach and in our history sessions we explore all sorts of approaches to learning.   Experiential learning has been a focus and below you can see pictures of my Year 3 group investigating the London Docklands Museum. It is a brilliant place to take children and the students took a theme, such as trade or war and considered how they would use the museum to develop children's understanding. Here is a link to an article I wrote on the subject, if you want to know more about the museum and different ways it could be used by children.
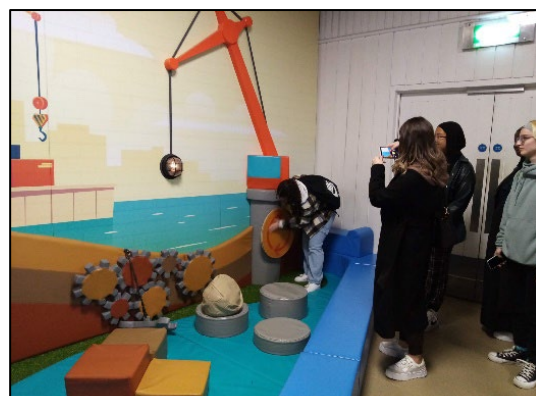
Our Year 2 student teachers visited Greenwich to see the National Maritime Museum and Queen's House, and enjoyed dressing up far too much. I brought in a range of museum loan boxes for PGCE students, and we discussed how we might engage children using artefacts. There were also opportunities to re-enact Pompeii using freeze frame techniques, and to bring contemporary sources about the Viking raids and the Battle of Hastings to life through role play. We considered how to make links and connections come alive to children, and how to encourage problem solving. Cross curricular links were made to art, DT and Geography when considering Explorers as a unt of work.

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Planning is a creative process and students looked at and designed their own curriculum maps as well as planning individual lessons and medium term plans. They also worked collaboratively to create a local history project .
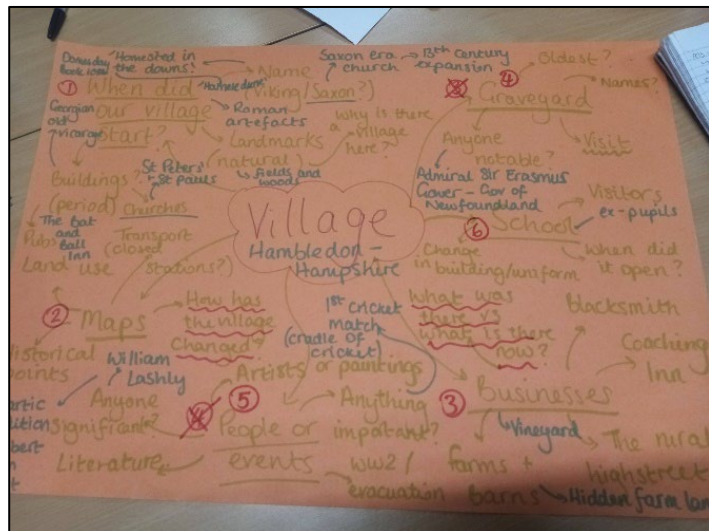
Finally in terms of developing subject knowledge we were very fortunate as Kathryn Tempest a Classicist, to discuss Ancient Rome and her recent work on a BBC documentary Julius Caesar: the making of a Dictator.

This is just a flavour of the year and I was so impressed with the enthusiasm and hard work that the trainee teachers put into the sessions.

Subject focus: The student experience of Art and Design

By Suan Ogier, Senior Lecturer in Art and Design Education

We could never have loved the earth so well if we had had no childhood in it. George Eliot

What is a wildflower? Looking closely and responding visually

At Roehampton we are proud to offer the widest possible range of subjects for our students to experience during their time with us, whether that is through the undergraduate (UG) or postgraduate (PG) route. Increasingly, in art and design we have noticed a decline in students having a good understanding of the subject from their own personal experiences at school. Often, they will have been encouraged to drop subjects such as art at around Year 8 in secondary education to concentrate on EBacc subjects, which in effect undermines the status of arts subjects in these pupils' minds. This is not just at Roehampton, but is backed up by the national picture: the issue is highlighted in the Primary Colours report, by Cooper (2018),

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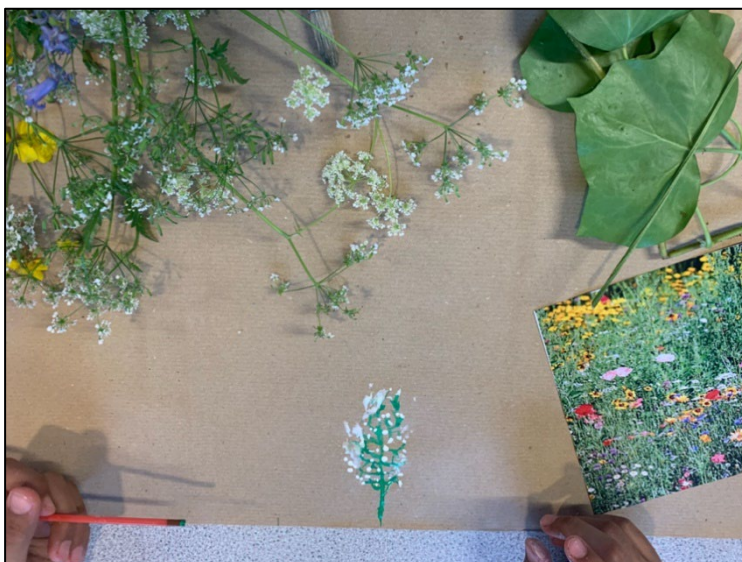
and by Thompson et al, (2023) in a Rapid Evidence Review, where is it stated '*Despite Art and Design being a foundation subject in the English national curriculum, available data suggests that most primary schools do not devote a great deal of time to arts education in general, and Art and Design in particular. Enrolments in secondary Art and Design are in steady decline*'(p3). These, often negative, experiences impact upon our soon-to-be primary teachers' attitudes towards having to teach the subject themselves: It can be hard to find the motivation and enthusiasm for a subject you either find difficult – or don't really believe in its relevance.

This is why we do everything we can to turn any fear and loathing around as quickly as possible in our art and design sessions. The introductory courses for Year 1 UG and PGCE, (including those on Schools Direct routes) cover the basic processes of Drawing; Painting; Printmaking and Sculpture – with a focus on **enjoyment**! They go on to cover other key processes, such as clay work, textiles and collage later on in their respective courses. I have talked before in these newsletter articles and at online CPD events for our partners, about the principles and values that underpin excellent teaching in art and design. I would say the key to ensuring that our potentially nervous teaching students are relaxed and ready to change their perceptions of what art is about, and go forward to teach art with confidence, are two things: **exploration and experimentation.** Applying these two essentials to all aspects of substantive subject knowledge across project planning in primary art and design will alleviate teacher stress and increase pupil engagement. Learning then becomes process driven, which in turn can lead to unexpected outcomes and exciting and surprising results. Learning 'objectives' can become learning 'intentions' so that we allow for flexibility and for individuality.

In my role as tutor, there is nothing more satisfying than to see our students blossom and grow in their understanding of the nature of teaching and learning in art and design. In May this year a group of 29 third-year non-specialist students opted for art as their post-BSE final module, before leaving us as qualified teachers and with their degrees in the bag. The module, Wider Curriculum 4: Curriculum Design, is short and sweet taking place over a two-week period, building on input that they had received in the Autumn term. The module requires them to work in a group to create and deliver a day-long workshop for a class of children, with a focus on EID (Equality, diversity, and inclusion). The students designed four fantastic projects championing female artists, as our area of EID, for upper KS2 classes at Sacred Heart Primary School, Roehampton Lane. After a couple of days of theoretical refreshers and practical workshops in the art studio, the theme, Women Artists: Mother Nature, was our inspiration for work with the children.

Left: Students trying out processes in the art studio

Spring is the perfect time of year for teaching about the importance of native wildflowers, and highlighting the role of what we might define as weeds in supporting a network for wildlife, so vital to our ecosystems. Diverse artworks such as *Wildflowers at the corner of a cornfield* (1856) by Martha Mutrie, and Captured, (2019) by Rebecca Louise Law were our starting points for collaborative drawing with a range of media, including inks, watercolour and pastels and collage, and taking this forward into printmaking and paper sculpture to demonstrate the progression model.

The groups then each planned an art-day for their classes in unique ways, and as the project planning developed, the principles and values that we promote throughout their training became evident in the pedagogy that was being applied. A diverse range of artists were introduced to children in Years 5 and 6 at the school, including 17th Century artist Maria Van Oosterwijck, and contemporary artists Angela Pozzi, Jadé Fadojutimi, Bernadette Twomey and Caroline Ashwood. This focus helped the students look further afield than the usual female artists that are commonly studied in primary schools, for example, Frida Khalo or Yayoi Kusama.

The students reinforced their understanding of how to build children's practical, theoretical and disciplinary knowledge (Ofsted 2023) across a whole day of making art, placing experimental and exploratory pedagogy at the centre, along with enjoyment. They were able to reflect in-action on assessment processes, children's responses and how to organise the learning so that managing behaviour is straightforward, in what can sometimes be seen as a noisy messy lesson!   They worked collaboratively and understood the value of supporting one another, as well as increasing their own subject knowledge.

The children's final outcomes were exciting and surprising, and the students themselves came away feeling they had done a great job!

Some final reflections show me that I have also done a great job in working with these wonderful young people who will soon be teachers in your schools, to instil a sense of purpose and pleasure in teaching art and design. I will let the students themselves tell you the value of this experience:

I've learnt that for children to access the learning, several scaffolding techniques must be implemented within the lesson. The most effective scaffolding technique implemented was prompting questioning, this enabled us to gather children's thoughts and assess their prior learning. I believe that incorporating different scaffolding techniques is important for high quality teaching as it provides children with support to access the curriculum.
Kate

I've learnt the value art has in pupils' lives and how it can be used to express pupils' emotions and how pupils' interpretations vary. It also showed me the importance of ensuring that all pupils feel represented. In my future practice, I aim to ensure that pupils feel in control and believe they are valued as artists.
Aleyna

I have learnt that it is important for children to engage in creative activities, especially those who find it challenging to do academic-based subjects, such as Maths and English. One of the children mentioned that the highlight of the day was being "allowed to use any technique and do anything with their imagination". In my future practice, I will ensure to incorporate art and design into other subject as often as possible to keep children's imagination alive.
Nora

I have learnt that it is important that children are creative in art. I believe modelling work and questioning children throughout their learning ensures that they can be creative and use their imagination and skills that they learn. In my future practice, I will ensure to use different questioning and prompts to help those who are struggling as well as modelling the art skills they should apply.
Maha

Further reading and resources

Arts in School report (2023):
https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/arts-in-schools-summary/

Cooper (2018) Primary Colours report:
https://fabians.org.uk/publication/primary-colours/

Ofsted Research Review (2023):
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-art-and-design

Artists

Rebecca Louise Law: https://www.rebeccalouiselaw.com/captured

Martha Mutrie:
https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/mutrie-wild-flowers-at-the-corner-of-a-cornfield-t15992

Angela Pozzi: https://seathingsart.com/bio.html

Jade Fadojutimi: https://jadefadojutimi.com/

Bernadette Twomey: https://btwomeyart.com.au/

Caroline Ashwood: https://carolineashwood.co.uk/

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Diversity in Computing

By Miles Berry, Professor of Computing Education

This article was originally published in ICT for Education's Sapientia: https://www.ictforeducation.co.uk/

We're nearing the tenth anniversary of computing becoming part of the national curriculum, which meant that coding and computer would be taught to all pupils, irrespective of their gender, ethnicity or home background. This inclusive vision for the subject has served us well, with close on 100% of pupils learning this now, at least up until the end of Key Stage 3. However, when pupils are given the option to choose the subjects they study for GCSEs and A-Levels, computing does not do well. The situation is improving: this year, entries are up 6.2% and 11.8% respectively, but there's an ongoing issue around under-representation of some groups of pupils. Put simply, when given the choice, girls, poorer pupils and some ethnic groups are much less likely to choose to study computer science, and some pupils in these groups are not even given the chance to do so.

Last summer, just 21% of GCSE entries are from girls, and it was only 15% of the A-level entries. For schools in the 20% of most affluent areas, 92% entered pupils for a GCSE in computing last summer, in the 20% of least affluent areas, this dropped to just 64%: one consequence of this is that 16% of pupils in these most affluent postcodes did the GCSE, but only 10% of those in the poorest areas did. Computing is a very meritocratic field, and offers lots of opportunity to address social mobility – it seems wrong that pupils who would most benefit from the opportunity to study this at GCSE are actually denied the opportunity to do so.

I'm aware that I come to this from a position of some privilege, as a while, middle class, middle aged man, but the unrepresentative nature of GCSE and A-Level computer science profoundly matters to me, as it should to us all. Partly this is because I think everyone ought to continue to study some aspects of computing until they leave school, given the impact of computing on other academic disciplines, all jobs, culture and society. It's also because computer science opens up lots of career opportunities for those who do study it. More than this, those who work in tech ought to be more representative of the society they're building tech for: if not, there's a real danger that the products we get are based too much on the needs and opinions of unrepresentative groups – as we're seeing with the misuse of AI.

There are many possible reasons for why diversity in computer science isn't all that it could be, but it's certainly not because it's a 'boys subject' – the first programmers were women, women make up more than 50% of those studying CS in Arab world universities, and girls get better grades than boys in both GCSE and A Level CS. In part, the disparity is because some pupils aren't even given the opportunity to take the subject. This could be because there just aren't enough computing teachers to go round, and it might be that it's even harder to recruit computing teachers in economically disadvantaged areas than in more affluent ones. I think there are also potential issues with the nature of the subject itself – ICT, for all its faults, had a much more diverse cohort than computer science has, and I'd love to see GCSE and A-Level computer science replaced by far broader qualifications in computing – recognising the full breadth of the national curriculum subject to take in the most useful bits of coding and computer science, alongside useful skills in IT and digital media, and critical digital literacy to help pupils think hard about the impacts of digital technologies. A broader qualification would be likely to broaden the uptake.

My 13-year old daughter put it very well: "The boys are interested in what computers can do, the girls are interested in what we can do with computers." This seems to reflect many of the opinions in the DfE's Omnibus survey last summer and the recently published Science Education Tracker. The latter reveals a

disturbing decline in pupils' interest in computing from Year 7 to Year 11, particularly among girls, and the numbers in the 2023 report are even worse than they were back in 2019. Digging into this data, the girls who choose to study computing often say they find it creative; those who do not often say it's because it's not interesting, not enjoyable or just too difficult – there are lessons to learn here for how the computing qualifications should be reformed.

Other than broadening the scope of the qualifications, what else might be done? The Raspberry Pi foundation conducted research into a number of strategies: developing non-formal learning of computing, promoting a sense of belonging for girls, focussing on the relevance of computing, working on teaching approaches such as peer instruction, pair programming and storytelling, and work on option choices and how the subject is promoted at this point. These are all really good ideas, and well worth considering in school. Alas, the research conducted during the pandemic, didn't indicate that any one of these made a statistically significant impact, but perhaps a combination of strategies might. The National Centre for Computing Education has developed an 'I Belong' project, addressing how computing can be better promoted to girls in Key Stage 3, which seems crucial to see impact on subsequent GCSE choices.

Before 2010, Becta developed a home access scheme, providing free computers and internet access to pupils entitled to free school meals. This was a great success, but it was stopped when the incoming government closed Becta. However, there's nothing to stop schools using some of the Pupil Premium funding now available to provide laptops and internet access to pupils who don't have these, as items 'necessary to overcome specific barriers to pupil attainment'. If we're serious about addressing the socioeconomic divide in computing education, and education more generally, it's hard to think of something that would have a better return on a relatively modest investment.

Culturally responsive teaching might do much to help pupils from under-represented ethnicities see computing as something for them. Again, the Raspberry Pi foundation has done much here, building on work conducted in the US. The approach includes using learners' own cultural knowledge and experiences to inform what we teach and providing opportunities for learners to pursue personally meaningful projects to express their own identities.

For all three of these issues, it's also worth exploring the role models and examples. Many pupils in these groups might not be able to see themselves in tech or tech-related roles. Brilliant as Grace Hopper, Ada Lovelace, Mary Jackson and Tommy Flowers were, pupils might not easily be able to see them following in their footsteps. Former pupils and diverse individuals working locally in creative or tech related industries might be much better at inspiring pupils, and demonstrating the relevance of computing for all.

Upcoming ECT roles at your school

If you wish to advertise ECT jobs with us, then please send adverts (PDF or Word files) to baprimary@roehampton.ac.uk and pgprimary@roehampton.ac.uk, and we will share these with our current students and graduates from last academic year.

Open University Reading & Writing Conference, 15th June

By Anna Harrison, Senior Lecturer in English Education

158 teachers enjoyed this inspiring conference. In that audience were four Roehampton trainee teachers. Jon Biddle is a well-known champion reading teacher in Norfolk. He added onto Twitter (X) *'I spoke to a couple of your students in one of the sessions. Their passion and enthusiasm filled me with hope.'*

Attending today's conference having just finished first year was a privilege. I gained invaluable knowledge and ideas. The workshops and in particular the keynote speakers have reminded me one of the reasons I am training to be a primary school teacher - to share my love of reading and writing with children.
Lucy Garrad, Year 2 student

It was such a great experience to be able to explore reading and writing for pleasure with people from different areas and backgrounds. One key point I will take away from the conference is being 'relentlessly positive'; children deserve adults who help build their confidence and autonomy through encouragement and enthusiasm. As teachers and trainee teachers, we can help children reframe themselves as readers and writers in a way that does not limit them. I look forward to exploring ideas presented during the conference, particularly the idea of encouraging children to write for pleasure by creating a space for children to write without expectations. If you get a chance to attend a reading for pleasure conference with the Open University, I would highly recommend it.
**Lucy Gavin, Year 3 student**

We listened to both Matt Goodfellow and Hannah Gold speak about the journeys behind their writing. It is so exciting to actually meet the authors!

There were five interactive workshops to choose from. Sign up for the Open University Reading for Pleasure newsletter. https://ourfp.org/

Find out about Live events and other conferences and enjoy the collection of ideas on the YouTube Channel:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzuS2j9QjqmMJ5Na3FJU2eA/videos

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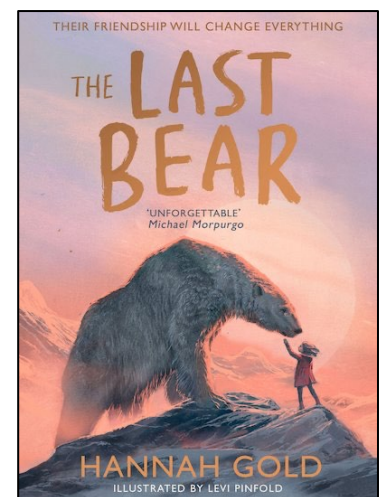
Our Primary Subject Leads

Subject: Geography

Subject Lead Name: Anthony Barlow

Email: anthony.barlow@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 0208 392 3386

Key subject/research interests: Pupil understanding of their everyday geography and the locality.

Subject: Computing

Subject Lead Name: Lynda Chinaka

Email: Lynda.chinaka@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone:

Key subject/research interests: Computing Education in Primary settings. Building confidence for the teaching of all elements of the computing curriculum: Computer Science, Information Technology and Digital Literacy. Ensuring practice and pedagogy that intersects with the identities and experiences of all learners. Computing and creativity for everyone!

Subject: English (BA)

Subject Lead Name: Anna Harrison

Email: anna.harrison@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 020 8392 3017

Key subject/research interests: Digital Literacies, Print and Digital Picturebooks, Reading, Siblings as Readers, Children's Literature, The Classics, Beatrix Potter.

Professional Links: Open University Reading for Pleasure, UKLA, IBBY (International Board of Books for Young People).

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Subject: English (PG/SD)

Subject Lead Name: Steph Laird

Email: s.laird@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 020 8392 3076

Key subject/research interests: The teaching of writing, children's responses to picture books, how children read film and the use of film as a stimulus for writing.

Professional Links: Member of the United Kingdom Literacy Association (UKLA)

Subject: History

Subject Lead Name: Susie Townsend

Email: susan.townsend@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 020 8392 3369

Key subject / research interest: Relativity and History, experiential learning, historic fiction and diversity.

Professional links: Regular contributor to Primary History journal and to Historical Association conferences.
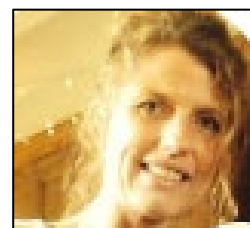
Subject: Maths

Subject Lead Name: Lorraine Hartley

Email: lorraine.hartley@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 020 8392 3365

Key subject/research interests: Planning and teaching and assessing in primary mathematics; fractions across the primary age range.

Professional Links: ATM/MA; NCETM and consultancy in schools.

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Subject: Art and Design

Subject Lead Name: Susan Ogier

Email: s.ogier@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 0208 392 3086

Key subject/research interests: Primary Art and Design education; holistic education; broad and balanced curriculum.

**Professional Links:** NSEAD; NAPTEC; NASBTT (Associate Consultant for Primary Art and Design)

Subject: Design and Technology

Subject Lead Name: Sue Miles-Pearson

Email: s.miles-pearson@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 0208 392 5781

Key subject/research interests: CAD CAM (Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Manufacture); Food technology that is being taught in the English primary schools; I am also interested in pupils in the Early years learning the key design and technology skills that they will require for Key Stage one and beyond.
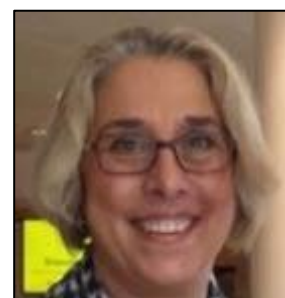
Subject: Science

Subject Lead Name: Dr Nicola Treby

Email: nicola.treby@roehampton.ac.uk

Telephone: 020 8392 3263

Key subject/research interests: Varied interests relating to primary science, including science enquiry and outdoor learning. I also have a research interest in pastoral care within the school context.

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Partnership Materials Page:
https://external.moodle.roehampton.ac.uk/enrol/index.php?id=108
(click "Log in as guest" & enter the password **RoehamptonTrainee**)

University of Roehampton Primary Partnership webpage:
https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/education/primary-school-partnerships/

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